

# Wasatch Co. Building Survey

Name of Building: Robert Krebs Blacksmith Shop

IN THE SWEAT OF THY FACE . . .

573

Information Required	Date Found
Location:	
Address:	Town: Midway
Architect:	
Builders:	
Building Material:	
Style of Building:	
Date Built:	
Original Owners:	
✓ FGS	
Pedigree	
Histories	
Pictures	
Subsequent Owners:	
Notes:	
References: 1.	
2.	

large room and filling this hole with water and clay. This mixture was allowed to soak overnight. Next morning, the mixture was transferred to a large wooden box which contained an apparatus referred to as a "dolly." The dolly actually was large mixing blades. The mixing device was powered by horses that plodded around the large box in a manner similar to old-time threshing of grain.

As the mud was being mixed, workmen would prepare wooden molds that were dipped in water and then in red sand. When the mud mixture was at the right consistency, it was taken from the mixing box, put into the wooden molds and leveled. These raw brick were then stacked with air space between each brick. Among the piles of brick, fire boxes or trenches were built, running about two feet apart. Fires were built in these trenches and kept burning continuously for three days and nights, or until the bricks were dry.

Indicative of the hard work involved in making brick is this note from the books of Henry Van Wagoner. Mr. Van Wagoner kept the time of his employees in a note book, and wrote after the name of one man: "One very, very hard days work for Henry Van Wagoner for only two dollars."

The Midway brick yards operated for many years, furnishing materials for such buildings as Wasatch High School which was built in 1912; homes such as the Nelson's by the railroad tracks, Bonner's, James Ritchie's in Charleston, Streets, George Johnson's and Coleman's. The Henry T. Coleman home built by John Watkins is said to be the first brick house built in the valley.

Some of the more prominent brick makers through the years have been David Provost, Theophilus Epperson, Amos and Lawrence Epperson, Louis Coleman and E. Luke Provost.

## BLACKSMITHS

Shoes for horses and oxen, wagon and buggy tires, sharpened and tempered, plow shares and drills and picks were just a few of the essentials needed by early settlers of Midway. For these necessities they looked to the blacksmiths of the community.

Fires of the huge forges would often glow late into the night and the anvils would ring as the blacksmiths worked to keep the farmers ready for another day's work. Services were usually paid for in produce, exchanged labor or whatever means of exchange was most readily available.

Those who were most prominent in the trade in Midway included Henry Alexander, Joseph Neilsen, John Wright, Henry T. Coleman, Robert Krebs, Samuel (Sam) Hair, Robert Ross, Ernest White, J. R. Springer and William Gibson. Mr. Gibson operated the last blacksmith shop in the community.